

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

104th Congress
2nd Session

Vote No. 52

March 26, 1996, 5:33 p.m.
Page S-2898 Temp. Record

PRESIDIO-PARKS BILL/Minimum Wage

SUBJECT: Administration of Presidio Properties and other matters . . . H.R. 1296. Kerry motion to table the Kerry amendment No. 3574 to the Kennedy amendment No. 3573.

ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE REJECTED, 0-97

SYNOPSIS: As reported, H.R. 1296, an act to provide for the administration of certain Presidio properties, will create a public trust to manage about 80 percent of the Presidio, a former army post in San Francisco, California, which is now a part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

The Kennedy amendment to the underlying bill would increase the minimum wage to \$4.25/hour until July 3, 1996, to \$4.70/hour from July 4, 1996 to July 4, 1997, and to \$5.15/hour thereafter.

The Kerry second-degree substitute amendment to the Kennedy amendment would increase the minimum wage to \$4.25/hour until July 3, 1996, to \$4.70/hour from July 4, 1996, to July 5, 1997, and to \$5.15/hour thereafter.

During debate, Senator Kerry moved to table the Kerry amendment. The motion to table is not debatable; however, some debate preceded the making of the motion. Generally, those favoring the motion to table opposed the amendment; those opposing the motion to table favored the amendment.

NOTE: Pending to the bill at the time the Kennedy and Kerry amendments were offered were a Murkowski substitute amendment, a Dole first-degree amendment to the Murkowski amendment, and a Dole second-degree substitute amendment to the Dole amendment.

The Murkowski substitute amendment would enact a bipartisan package of more than 50 park and public lands bills, including the Presidio bill. Most of the bills in the package are noncontroversial. Two of the bills that have generated controversy are the Utah Wilderness bill (S. 884) and the Sterling Forest bill (S. 223). S. 884 would designate 2 million acres in Utah as wilderness. Utah's State and local governments want to limit that amount to 900,000 acres; Federal land management experts, after 17 years of study of 3.2 million acres to see if they qualified for designation as wilderness, recommended designating 1.9 million of those acres as wilderness; certain environmental organizations have demanded the designation of 5 million to 6 million acres in Utah as wilderness.

(See other side)

YEAS (0)		NAYS (97)				NOT VOTING (3)	
Republicans (0 or 0%)	Democrats (0 or 0%)	Republicans (52 or 100%)		Democrats (45 or 100%)		Republicans (1)	Democrats (2)
		Abraham	Helms	Akaka	Inouye	Simpson ⁻²	Bradley ⁻²
		Ashcroft	Hutchison	Baucus	Johnston		Rockefeller ⁻³
		Bennett	Inhofe	Biden	Kennedy		
		Bond	Jeffords	Bingaman	Kerrey		
		Brown	Kassebaum	Boxer	Kerry		
		Burns	Kempthorne	Breaux	Kohl		
		Campbell	Kyl	Bryan	Lautenberg		
		Chafee	Lott	Bumpers	Leahy		
		Coats	Lugar	Byrd	Levin		
		Cochran	Mack	Conrad	Lieberman		
		Cohen	McCain	Daschle	Mikulski		
		Coverdell	McConnell	Dodd	Moseley-Braun		
		Craig	Murkowski	Dorgan	Moynihan		
		D'Amato	Nickles	Exon	Murray		
		DeWine	Pressler	Feingold	Nunn		
		Dole	Roth	Feinstein	Pell		
		Domenici	Santorum	Ford	Pryor		
		Faircloth	Shelby	Glenn	Reid		
		Frist	Smith	Graham	Robb		
		Gorton	Snowe	Harkin	Sarbanes		
		Gramm	Specter	Heflin	Simon		
		Grams	Stevens	Hollings	Wellstone		
		Grassley	Thomas		Wyden		
		Gregg	Thompson				
		Hatch	Thurmond				
		Hatfield	Warner				

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

- 1—Official Business
- 2—Necessarily Absent
- 3—Illness
- 4—Other

SYMBOLS:

- AY—Announced Yea
- AN—Announced Nay
- PY—Paired Yea
- PN—Paired Nay

S. 223 is controversial because it would, in part, use scarce Park Service funds to purchase scenic easements along the Appalachian Trail (many Senators consider this project to be of lower priority than other projects that need funding).

The Dole first-degree amendment to the Murkowski amendment would provide for the exchange of certain lands and interests in areas of the Deerlodge National Forest, Montana.

The Dole second-degree substitute amendment to the Dole amendment would substitute identical provisions with the addition of language to establish the Vancouver National Historic Reserve in the State of Washington.

No arguments were expressed in favor of the motion to table.

Those opposing the motion to table contended:

The purchasing power of the minimum wage is at a 40-year low. We find that fact to be unacceptable. People who work at full time jobs should not be working at jobs that leave them in poverty, and to ensure that they are not the minimum wage should be raised. Some of our colleagues disagree. This issue is of such importance that we think Senators have a responsibility to debate it and then go record as either favoring or opposing it. The American people have a right to know where Senators stand. Unfortunately, we have not been able to gain unanimous consent to set a time certain for a vote on raising the minimum wage. Therefore, we have offered this amendment, and we will move to table it as a means of making Senators go on record.

While favoring the motion to table, some Senators expressed the following reservations:

It is amazing how interested our Democratic colleagues are in dictating the Senate's schedule now that they are in the minority. For the entire 103d Congress, Democrats controlled both Houses of Congress and the presidency. They could have brought up the minimum wage at any time then. Somehow it did not strike them as that important. Today, though, the AFL-CIO is in town, and it has just promised that it is going to spend an extra \$35 million to defeat Republican candidates. With this promise in hand our Democratic colleagues scurried to the floor with their amendment and immediately demanded a vote. We will not oblige them. Many Senators have very strong views both for and against raising the minimum wage, and they should have ample opportunity to express those views. Further, there are other issues which a majority of Senators find more pressing, such as reforming welfare and Medicaid. Our liberal colleagues in the minority have not been bombarding us with petitions to set definite time frames for votes on these very important issues. Deals certainly are possible. If our colleagues are willing to bring up, debate, and dispose of one of the many issues which they are filibustering, we may be able to set aside time for debate on the minimum wage. Our colleagues incessant filibustering on virtually every item that has been considered this Congress has literally doubled the normal workload in the Senate, and has hardly made us more predisposed to give in to their demands that we set aside a couple of weeks for an issue they need to bring up to please a special interest supporter of theirs. If and when we ever get to a debate on the minimum wage, we will discuss how recent research shows that increasing the minimum wage costs blacks and hispanics jobs, and increases the percentage of white students who quit school and take minimum wage jobs. We will have no problem explaining why we do not want high school and college kids quitting school, nor will we have any problem explaining why we are against increasing the already dismally high rates of black and hispanic unemployment. For now, though, we will not give our colleagues their political vote. We will all vote against the motion to table, giving them a meaningless, unanimous vote. We will then offer a motion and amendments on more important issues that will take precedence over their attempt to dictate the schedule. If matters get too bogged down, we will just pull the bill, and they can explain to their constituents why they killed this parks bill with their political games.